

Message Text

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63

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1957

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

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AMCONSUL ADANA

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AMCINSUL IZMIR

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR GR TU XF

SUBJ: TURKISH PRESS REACTION TO SADAT'S REPORTED

REMARKS ON ATATURK

REF: ATHENS 119

1. DECEMBER 31 TURKISH PRESS AND TURKISH STATE RADIO REPORTED THAT EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT ANWAR SADAT HAD MADE A PUBLIC STATEMENT IN WHICH HE PRAISED HIGHLY KEMAL ATATURK, THE FOUNDER OF MODERN TURKEY. ACCORDING TO THESE REPORTS, SADAT SAID, "IN MY CHILDHOOD WE HAD ONLY ATATURK'S PHOTOGRAPH IN OUR HOME. BEFORE EVERYTHING ELSE, ATATURK WAS A MOSLEM HERO, AND MOSLEMS ARE PROUD TO HAVE HAD A HERO WHO ACCOMPLISHED A REVOLUTION FOR THE FIRST TIME AND WROTE ITS HISTORY. MY FATHER EXPLAINED TO ME THAT ATATURK HAD ACCOMPLISHED A REVOLUTION FOR HIS COUNTRY AND HAD ACHIEVED HIS COUNTRY'S INDEPENDENCE."

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2. NEWSPAPERS RANGING FROM CONSERVATIVE TERCUMAN

TO LIBERAL-REFORMIST MILLIYET POINTED TO THE SADAT STATEMENT AS INDICATING A DESIRE ON EGYPT'S PART TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH TURKEY. UNDER THE HEADLINE "TURKEY AND EGYPT WILL COOPERATE MORE CLOSELY IN 1976" TERCUMAN ON JANUARY 4 EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT EGYPT'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE CYPRUS ISSUE WOULD BE MORE UNDERSTANDING OF TURKISH SENSITIVITIES IN THE NEW YEAR. IN MILLIYET THE SAME DAY NILUFER YALCIN TRACED THE COURSE OF TURKISH-EGYPTIAN RELATIONS SINCE THE 1952 EGYPTIAN REVOLUTION. TURKEY'S TIES WITH THE WEST UNDER THE NATO AND CENTO ALLIANCES WERE, ACCORDING TO YALCIN, STUMBLING BLOCKS TO CLOSE RELATIONS. WITH, HOWEVER, TURKEY'S STRAINED RELATIONS WITH HER NATO PARTNERS AFTER THE CYPRUS INTERVENTION AND EGYPT'S ESTRANGEMENT FROM THE MORE RADICAL ARAB STATES FOLLOWING THE INTERIM SINAI ACCORDS, YALCIN SAW BOTH TURKEY AND EGYPT LOOKING FOR NEW FRIENDS IN THE REGION.

3. MASS-CIRCULATION GUNAYDIN JANUARY 5 STRUCK A DIFFERENT NOTE IN AN ARTICLE BY TANJU AKERSON ENTITLED "TURKEY HAS BECOME THE MIDDLE EAST'S POLITICAL CENTER." WHILE AGREEING THAT EGYPT MIGHT BE TRYING TO DRAW CLOSER TO TURKEY FOLLOWING CRITICISM OF THE SINAI ACCORDS BY OTHER ARAB STATES, AKERSON REMINDED GUNAYDIN READERS THAT, "SADAT'S OPINION OF ATATURK IS NOT RPT NOT THAT OF TURKEY. TURKEY DOES NOT (RPT NOT) CONSIDER ATATURK A "MOSLEM HERO," BUT THE FIRST LEADER OF A WAR OF INDEPENDENCE OF AN OPPRESSED NATION. TURKEY IS A STATE FOUNDED BY SUCH A LEADER, AND THIS MUST BE REMEMBERED BY THOSE WHO TRY TO DIVIDE THE MIDDLE EAST INTO BLOCS."

4. COMMENT: IT SHOULD BE INTERESTING TO SEE HOW TURKISH PRESS COMMENT TOWARD SADAT AND EGYPT WILL DEVELOP FOLLOWING ANNOUNCEMENT OF INTENDED CARAMANLIS VISIT (REF TEL).
MACOMBER

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